

ARCADIA

A Student Journal for Faith and Culture



Different Devotions at Seton Hall

The journal of the
Department of Catholic Studies
Vol. VII — 2015

“ET IN ARCADIA
EGO.”

E D I T O R I A L B O A R D

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ARCADIA: A Student Journal for Faith and Culture

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Arcadia ~ A Student Journal for Faith and Culture offers a vehicle where University undergraduates can contribute to the ongoing "dialogue between the Catholic tradition and all areas of contemporary culture." A project of the Department of Catholic Studies, *Arcadia* is edited by students and faculty of Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, and is published annually at the close of the Spring semester.

Volume 3 - Summer 2015

Introduction

John Hughes

I am proud to present to you the 2015 edition of *Arcadia: The Department of Catholic Studies Student Journal*. When Dr. Ines Murzaku, our Department Chairperson, approached me about returning as Student Editor for publication of *Arcadia*, I was thrilled at the prospect of publishing a variety of material that reflect how students live out and experience their faith within Seton Hall University.

After careful consideration, we chose “Devotions” as our theme for this year’s edition of the journal. The entries represent the diverse student body of the Department of Catholic Studies. You will find that our contributors’ majors include Education, History, Philosophy, and Theology, among others. All students whose writing is published in this journal have one thing in common: they are Catholic. We also have contributions from alumni, a nod to the fact that Seton Hall is a home even after graduation.

Not only do our contributors’ backgrounds vary, but the way in which they express their faith and the various devotions are just as significant. Catholicism gives us so many ways to pray and in this journal we see drawings, essays, poetry, and photography among the ways that our contributors show their faith.

Despite their differences, our contributors share a common theme: an eagerness to grow in their faith. These young men and women have sought to make the most of Seton Hall University's mission in that they have truly grown in the "Mind, Heart, and Spirit." I hope that you find these entries as powerful as the editorial staff has found them. The Catholic Church at Seton Hall University is very much alive through the New Evangelization. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI referred to a new springtime within our Church, and Seton Hall can certainly count its fruits as part of this rebirth of our Church.

Please be assured that you are remembered in our prayers at Seton Hall University every day, and that your assistance to the University—spiritually, monetarily, or service-wise—is deeply appreciated. God is certainly alive on our campus. Our students continue to seek our Lord. I hope that these documents, these testimonies will prove to you their passion for the faith.

God's Ink

Nicole Pachner

God is penning salvation history with the ink of human lives. There is a reason you are living. God doesn't use whiteout. HE IS GOD and there is a reason you are in this story, He doesn't do things by accident or make mistakes. He forms a human being and knits the person together, He knows your beginning, He knows your middle, He knows your end.

There has to be some beauty in this human life. Even those saints who suffered, the ones who by all means shouldn't have had any joy... THEY WERE JOYFUL – that can't just be an accident. With each breathe you take, each tear-filled prayer you cry out to God, He is making you into a saint.

Each smile that lands on your face and each blessing in your life is a gift. There is no such thing as the bad outweighing the good. You have weaved into this story from the very beginning. There is a love beyond compare, beyond words, beyond your loftiest dreams, and that, my friends, is the love of God.

Because the God who made the mountains and stars and sun and moon can make even the darkness beautiful. He made light to shine through. Even on the darkest night, cloudy and black, the stars shine through. You get a glimpse of the moonlight and it doesn't seem so scary anymore.

Even when evil seems to be winning the battle, Christ has already won. The battle, the war, everything. Even the most definite thing – death, he conquered, He rose through it all for you. I understand it feels too hard to go on. Christ knows, the creator who created all things including you, knows.

He knows because he created that cross specifically for you. There is no pain that Christ doesn't know. There is no cross that is greater than His, greater than all the sin of the whole world. There is no cross that isn't light when on His shoulders. He dwells in you. He is in your shoulders. You are not meant to just survive the cross He handed you. You are not meant to numbly walk the way. There is a higher calling than that. Your life is beautiful.

The cross is how Christ redeemed you. Share in the glory of making it to the finish.

He humbled himself and died the most painful death to show us that there is no suffering you cannot endure. Just as Christ redeemed you on the cross, God will use this cross to make you the you He always had in mind for you to be.

Calvary's Call at Pamplona

Peter Welsh

—on *St. Ignatius*, whose recovery
began on the feast of *St. Peter*

‘I was a man given over to the vanities of the
world, and took special delight in the exercise of
arms, with a great and vain desire of winning glo-
ry.’

—*St. Ignatius of Loyola*

At the fortress in Pamplona you saw
your leg blown up
By a cannonball, all too fortunate it
wasn't sawed off
As is done to an appendage when
there has to be saved
A whole soldier (as we cut off the foot
to save the soul,
Or from vines dead stems that are but blood
less veins).
From the battle they carried you off on
horse back
(As I imagine it), all but a corpse, with
the vain hope-
So you thought- that you might again
fight for glory,
For your sword was meant to mar far
more Infidels
Than just one Moor who swore against
your Faith.

*

Better for your soldier's glory that you
nearly bled to death
Since only then could a blessing come
down from some cloud
To stem and clot what would've flooded
that plain in Spain;
Pains though there were, a torture of
both mind and limb,
Your heart yearned for the rush of blood
that at the thrust
Of swords rushes like a rider on horse
or storm-tide to shore.

*

In your bed, half-dead, you yearned for
stories of chivalry
(It being the age of that mirage), with
each page a mirror
Of your days as a mere page and now
nights as a knight-
Dark indeed- but soon 'chivalry' seemed a
worn-out word,
Dim as the moon's rim beside the summer
sun at noontime.
Not as sudden was it as Paul thrown
down from his mount,
But by slow hours a shy rival to this
Mistress Chivalry arose
And amid the throes of love for another
all those novels
You'd throw aside and devote your mind
to lives of Saints,
Seeing in each Saint's image a miracle to
mar that mirage.

*

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Soon you knew you'd not wear those
hose and boots
You were used to, nor go on horse with your
sword raised
Ever again, for your lower body was shattered
past mending
(Yet you, youngest of thirteen, were not
the unluckiest
And what your enemy meant for evil God
meant for good).
At that battle you began an imitation,
through suffering,
Of the One you'd pursue through the rest of
your years,
So your soldier's lost glory was toward the
cost of the war
That was fought in your soul and soon
won through Calvary.

*

A Catholic cannot but find it a bit odd,
even ironic, that you,
Who lost your sword- almost soul- through
this city of bulls
And an iron cannonball, found the Word.
(and soon an Order),



Rome at Night– © 2015, Zachary DeVoe

Xavier

Peter Welsh

Bothered by God's prophet amid your loftier
visions
You resisted him until you'd heard, 'What's
it profit
A man to gain the world...', the words of
your Lord
Given through your other brother
(Peter and you were the first Paris pair)
who'd spare no pain
To prove to men that to gain France
Is to risk Heaven.

*

Heavy burden then he, Ignatius, labored
Under, But in the end Heaven
sent graces to begin; no rude band
Like God's Franciscans,
Under the rood- Heaven's banner-
An uneven seed of seven
soon took root and grew to a tree
Whose branches,
like heavenly constellations, spanned
As far as ever darkness-parting star has
And came
Lanterns in an evening,
to the Land of the Rising Sun.

*

Upon your thirty-fifth birthday
you left Portugal,
Together with Simon, to go to Goa,
a full-fledged Jesuit
On his Christian mission to gather the
Master's fruit,
(If names are destiny you'd have
been a Franciscan?)
The great Xavier crossing over with
Savior and Son,
Upon losing shore no surer of this harvest
being rich
In wheat (amid rice) than of murder making
you a martyr.

*

A Francis outside of France is who you
became, Each Saint being one only
as far as he departs From his own heart
so as to return- just as sailors
Who sail east over the earth must end
back west-
To a new heart in the same breast,
the Breath Of Heaven
having blown you onward toward Home.

*

Alone at the end, and yet not God-
abandoned
Like some stranded castaway
praying to be saved
Solely for sake of hearing your name
Paris-praised,
(You, like Paul, were a Soul who sought and drew
Others with you,
just as brothers Simon and Andrew)
The truth is your end was not an island
you died on,

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It being the beginning of your Heavenly mission.

*

If far away the hardest- with nearest
rest the sleep of death-
Your earthly journey was hardly your farthest;
so not then
Any missions to India, China, or Japan,
that pagan chain
Of lands bound by an odd god and the
hand of Fate,
But Heaven, where even now (books say)
you labor in Faith.



Prayer and Silence

Peter Gallagher

Prayer and silence. These two concepts transformed my own relationship with Christ and have helped develop my vocation to the priesthood. During my senior year of high school I experienced some significant events that led me to finally begin praying authentically. I began realizing that I needed and yearned for God and wanted what he desired for my life. Through my spiritual life, I began to see myself as not just Peter, but Peter, a son of God who is loved and has a role to play in the Church so as to guide others to see God's presence in their life.

Praying before the Blessed Sacrament can be hard at first. What do we say to God? I can attest that many times I've gone a chapel or church and simply let my mind run wild as the calming presence of our Lord began to transform me. I find it helpful to remember that God is real, God is a person, and our prayer life is a two-way conversation. We speak, and we listen patiently for God to respond. With faith, we know that God hears our prayers and answers them in his time, according to His will.

Time, as I mentioned above, is a prized commodity in the world of young adults. However, time spent with others can certainly be seen as an expression of love toward one another. We spend the most time with those whom we truly love to be around and consider our closest companions. This same concept of time thus should apply to God! In order to properly express our love and affection for God, our Creator and Redeemer, we should give

him our time. This will certainly seem difficult in the beginning, and it would be a good idea to plan it into your schedule for the day. However, I assure you from my experiences and others close to me, that your pattern of prayer, your pattern of time spent with the Lord will eventually not seem like a chore.

It will not seem like some unimportant time of the day. It will be something treasured and loved as a necessary element of each day of your life. At this point, I truly find it difficult to understand how people go a day without some prayer or sign of affection to God. He has blessed us with so much, and our simple prayers of thanksgiving are fitting signs of affection.

I would like to end with this Scripture passage from 1 Kings 19 that helps characterize the importance of silence in our relationship with God: God said,

“Go out and stand on the mountain before The Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence.¹When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.”

God is constantly calling out to us. He thirsts for our love. He calls us by name, to do his will on earth. May those discerning God’s call to the priesthood listen in the silence like Elijah did in order to say yes!



“Eucharist” - © 2015, Zachary DeVoe

The Rosary and Why I Refuse to Worship Mary

Eric Notarus

It is said that upon meeting a new person, every good Jewish mother does the same thing, immediately show off her beloved children. Mary, the Virgin Mother of Christ, is no exception to this rule. The inmost desire of Mary, the Ark of the New Covenant, is for every single person in the entire world to intimately know and understand her Divine son. If this is the desire the Blessed Mother, then why do Catholics offer up a prayer that is completely centered on the mother of Christ? Shouldn't we be emphasizing the life of Christ instead of offering up a prayer that starts with the words "Hail Mary full of grace..."? The long, drawn out and theological answer to these questions would probably bore even the most devout reader, let alone someone who is reading this simply because the internet is down. Instead, by using the magic of storytelling, I am going to explain how growing closer to Christ is inherently what happens when one prays the Rosary.

At the time of my conversion, in 2004, I did not know anything substantial about the Catholic Faith. My ignorance included the purpose for nuns and more importantly, who Christ was. As I learned more about the faith I began to read a lot of scripture. As this unquenchable thirst for God's Word enveloped me, I also became aware of a subtle desire to pray the Rosary thing that I had heard about. I soon began praying the words over and over with little knowledge of their origin and what they meant. Eventually I discovered that the entire first half of the Hail Mary is taken from the Gospels of the New Testament. More than that, I had realized that I was being drawn to dwell upon God's word as I prayed my daily Rosary.

I discovered that almost all of the mysteries of the Rosary corresponded to the events that I was reading about in the Bible. I slowly began meditating on the limited scriptures that I knew as I prayed the Rosary. The more scripture I read, the more scripture began to appear in my Rosary meditations. When I started reading the Old Testament, I implemented these new scripture verses into my Rosary routine.

The Rosary was the catalyst for me to better understand and meditate on the Word of God. I eventually learned from a great friend that this was called a Scriptural Rosary and it is one of the best ways to pray the Rosary, because of the intimate connection one gets with Christ.

The important thing to remember about the Rosary is that it is immensely greater than the prayer of the Hail Mary. The Rosary is completely designed to draw us closer to the Son of God. This process begins with the Apostles Creed, where we express how much we love God and the faith He has given to us. It continues with all of the beautifully contemplative mysteries that encourage us to plunge deeper into the life of Christ. Finally, the Rosary concludes with a beautiful pray called the Hail Holy Queen, which ends with the glorious words, "Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ."

I guess that this was an entirely long winded way of explaining that those who pray the Rosary— at least when saying it— are being led by the Blessed Mother toward her most beloved son our Lord Jesus Christ!



“Before Him” by Zachary DeVoe ‘15

Veni Sancti Spiritu –
“Come Holy Spirit”

John Hughes

“Come Holy Spirit.” It seems like those three words are among the first I say to myself whenever I begin a task, whether it be grading student assignments in my capacity as a teacher, beginning a task as a student, or beginning the workday of any variety of jobs, or even before going to an event. The Holy Spirit is known for being a sign of wisdom, that of guidance and teaching.

I didn’t know much about the Holy Spirit before I came to Seton Hall University, but my involvement in a mission group, Saint Paul’s Outreach, has fostered a devotion to the Third Person of the Holy Trinity in a way I never thought would happen. Now, I don’t know where I would be without my devotion to the Holy Spirit.

I am an education major who (not surprisingly) works with kids of all ages a lot. If there is one common perception about kids, it is that they can ask difficult questions that may have only little relation to the material at hand, but are still good questions to ask about life. That’s my experience at least, from teaching over seven years of religious education classes. No matter how well prepared I may be for a class, no time ever goes exactly according to plan. It is those times when forced to improvise, those times answering unexpected questions, and those moments that can determine who controls the classroom, that the Holy Spirit comes into play.

I count on the Holy Spirit to give me the guidance to say the right thing when I’m not certain on my an-

swer or to at least give me the grace to phrase an answer in the best way possible for my students.

It began in high school and it continues today, but I had a devotion to Ignatian Exercises, particularly through discernment. I count on the Holy Spirit to help me determine where God is calling me. The decision to come to Seton Hall, oddly enough, was a decision where a mentor teacher told me day in and day out to pray to the Holy Spirit. It was the peace I felt when thinking about prospects at SHU that I didn't feel with other schools that led me to make my deposit and declare education as my major.

The Holy Spirit is also a source of great knowledge for me— I find I understand material better when putting faith in the Holy Spirit to help me fully demonstrate my knowledge on an assignment. A notoriously poor test-taker, but a fairly intelligent student (GPA-wise) when it comes to school, I perform stronger when I pray before beginning an assignment. I may have studied plenty and correctly, but the Holy Spirit is so key in giving me the confidence to believe in my own abilities.

I keep a prayer to the Holy Spirit in my wallet and have a small image depicting Pentecost on my desk. I trust that the Holy Spirit, just as He descended upon the Apostles, will continue to guide me throughout my life. I pray each morning, echoing the words of the first prayers of Morning Prayer that priests and some laity say: “Lord, open my lips and my mouth will proclaim Your praise.” I trust the Holy Spirit will guide me to do that each and every day, as a person, educator, and most importantly, a child of the Most High.

About the Authors

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